

they competed throughout the summer. Gladstone now enjoys the distinction of being the third team from Delta County to reach the Little League Softball World Series.

Girls Little League Softball, which began in 1974, has provided countless young women an opportunity to compete at a high level. Through the instruction they receive on and off the field, these young women gain valuable skills that will help them achieve success throughout their lifetime. The 2007 Gladstone All-Star 11–12 year-old Girls Softball Team includes Jordan Schwartz, Ashley Hough, Jammie Botruff, Heather Sanderson, Jordan Kowalski, Nicole Sharon, Shannon Wolf, Neena Brockway, Alison Austin, Nikki Barteld, Averi Kanyuh. The coaching staff includes Manager Andrew Schwartz and Assistant Coach John Nevala.

This is a summer these young women will certainly never forget. I know I am joined by their family, friends and supporters, as well as my colleagues in the Senate, in congratulating the entire team on a highly successful and memorable season. I look forward to hearing about many more successes from these young ladies in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO CURTIS H. SYKES

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise to honor the life of a great Arkansan, Curtis H. Sykes, who passed away last week.

As a member of the Special Task Force to Study the History and Contributions of Slave Laborers in the Construction of the U.S. Capitol, Mr. Sykes made valuable contributions to the important and challenging work that the task force conducted. As its name indicates, the purpose of the task force is to recognize and preserve the contributions that African Americans made to the construction of the Capitol complex. The task force has served as a working memorial to pay tribute to those who made an enormous sacrifice to help build the greatest symbol of our Nation's freedom. I was pleased that the task force was developed to include citizen representation, and Curtis Sykes was an integral part of helping us examine those contributions.

In addition to his work on the task force, Curtis Sykes was also an accomplished historian and respected community leader in Arkansas. Mr. Sykes served as chairman of the Arkansas Black History Committee since 1993 and was the first African-American member of the North Little Rock History Commission. He brought a wealth of experience to the study of our great State's history and was an advocate for equality, fairness, and justice.

Shortly after his graduation from the segregated Scipio A. Jones High School, located in his hometown of North Little Rock, in 1947, Curtis served our Nation in the U.S. Army from 1950 to 1952. He then pursued a lifelong career in education.

Prior to retiring in 1985, Curtis worked for 33 years in education as a teacher, football coach, assistant principal and principal. He was one of the first African-American principals in the Little Rock school district during the 1960s, and after his life in education, he led the fight to pass legislation in the Arkansas General Assembly which established a Black history curriculum in Arkansas schools.

He also continued to pursue his passion to help young children learn and succeed after retirement through his work in a number of civic and community organizations. His activities included offices in the Arkansas Chapter of the NAACP, the Young YMCA/COPE of Central Arkansas and Headstart of Pulaski County.

Mr. Sykes earned his bachelor's degree from Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock, Arkansas; a master's from Texas College in Tyler, Texas; and his master's in education from Harding University in Searcy, AR. In fact, he became the first African American to receive a degree from Harding in 1962.

In addition, Mr. Sykes received a number of honors and awards during his lifetime. He was the recipient of the Salute to Greatness Award from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission for his outstanding record of community service. He was also recognized by the city of North Little Rock when Mayor Patrick Hays declared a Curtis Sykes Day in 1992 to honor his many contributions to the city.

Curtis H. Sykes will be greatly missed by communities all across Arkansas, as well as those he worked with here in Washington, DC. He had an impact on thousands of people from all walks of life, and his death will leave a void throughout Arkansas.

He will not be forgotten, however. The Arkansas History Commission contains the Curtis H. Sykes Collection which includes Scipio High yearbooks, past Arkansas Teacher Association journals, and other North Little Rock memorabilia and documents which will enable future generations to learn about his life and legacy.

In the weeks and months ahead, our thoughts and prayers will be with friends and family of the Sykes as they grieve the loss of a true Arkansas pioneer.●

HONORING MARY AND BILL KIRCHNER

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I honor two of my constituents on a very special and rare milestone. Later this month, Mary and Bill Kirchner of Atlanta will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

Mary and Bill were married on September 28, 1957, in Grosse Pointe, MI, bringing together two of that city's longtime families—the Fitzsimons and the Kirchners. The next 50 years took Mary and Bill from Michigan to South Carolina and finally to Georgia, where they have lived since 1988.

Bill was a homebuilder in Michigan and on Hilton Head Island, SC, and later started his own property rental business on the island. Mary started her own successful business on Hilton Head called The Welcome Mat, then switched careers and put her salesmanship to good use selling real estate. When they moved to Atlanta, Mary and Bill decided to try an entirely new business venture by opening an antique consignment shop. Sixteen years later, Now & Again remains a beautiful and popular shop in Buckhead. In fact, my wife Dianne has been a customer. Although they have certainly earned the right to retire, Mary and Bill still run their shop 6 days a week with the help of a great staff.

While their professional lives have been an adventure, Mary and Bill made their biggest life-changing decision early on in their marriage. On a chilly February day in 1964, a nervous Mary and Bill arrived at an adoption agency in Michigan hoping to hear that they would be allowed to adopt a baby. Instead, the agency asked if Mary and Bill would like to go home with 6-month-old twin girls. The shocked couple said yes and forever changed the lives of those twins, Sarah and Joan, for the better.

Their daughter Sarah is now married to Stephen Midas and works as a stay-at-home mom to four children in Chesapeake, VA, and also does some bookkeeping for Mary and Bill's shop. Their daughter Joan and her daughter live in Washington, DC, and Joan has gone from covering politics as an AP reporter in Atlanta to now working for some of those same elected officials she used to cover. I happen to be one of those, and Joan now serves on my staff in Washington. I know Mary and Bill are very proud of both their daughters.

I join with Joan, Sarah, Stephen and their children—Alex, Ben, Anna, Josie and Isabel—in congratulating Mary and Bill Kirchner on reaching their golden anniversary. Their marriage and their commitment to each other is an inspiration to us all.●

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF EACH OF THE 18 IRAQI BENCHMARKS. AS RECEIVED DURING RECESS OF THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2007—PM 25

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 1314 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110–28) (the "Act"), attached is a report that assesses the status of each of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks contained in the Act and declares whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these